

The argument of the Epistle of saint Paule to the Colossians by Des. Erasmus of Roterodame.



The Colossians are a people of Asia the lesse, dwelling nigh vnto the Laodicians. Them had not the Apostle Paul him selfe seen, as whiche were instructed in the fayth of Christ, either by the preaching of Archippus, or (as S. Ambrose sayth) of Epaphras, who were with this matter put in trust. In great teopardy were these people by reason of false Apostles, whiche labored to byng them into a very pestilent opinion, teaching them that the sonne of God was not the meane and authoꝝ of saluacion, but that al menne haue accesse and entrie vnto the father by the healpe of Angels. These men sayd further that forasmuche as in the tyme of the olde testament all thynges were done by the ministery and seruice of Angels, that Christ the sonne of God was neither comen doune into the yearth, nor would come. Beside this the same teachers with Christes doctrine myngled Jewishnes and superstitious Philosophie, obseruyng and keepng certain pointes of the lawe, superstitiously also honourng the Sunne, the Moone, and starres, with suche other smal trinkettes of this worlde, bearyng the Colossians in hand that they wet also bound to do the same. Them biddeth Paule to remembꝛe theyꝝ profession, evidently declaring that whatsoeuer they had vntil that tyme obtained, was geuen vnto the by none Angel, but by Christ the creatoꝝ of Angels, that he onely was head of the churche, and that saluacion shuld at nomans hand be sought for, but at his, in whiche treatise he also defendeth his owne authozitie, against suche as laboured to empayze it. After whiche he geueth them diligent warnng to take hede, lest they be deceiued with y high wordes of false Apostles, or forged visions of angels, and so by meane ther of fall either to Jewishnes, or els into the supersticion of Philosophie. All whiche pointes Paule in the two fyrst chapters entreateth of. In the other two he exhorteth them to vertuous and godly liuyng, namely geuyng rules, how the wife should vse her selfe towarde her husband, how the husband againe should vse his wife, after what soꝛte the father should be towarde his children, and the children likewise towarde theyꝝ fathers, the seruantes to theyꝝ maisters, and the maisters to theyꝝ seruantes. The last part, sayng that he warneth Archippus of his duetie, is all spent in commendacions. This Epistle was wrytten out of prison in Ephesus, & sent by Tychicus, as Paule him selfe in this present epistles sayeth. The latine argumentes shewe, that it was also sent thither by Onesimus, for so him selfe wryteth also in the last chapter. The Greke titles recoꝛde, that it was sent from the cytie of Rome, and in deede thence sent he Onesimus, whom Paule beyng prisoner there had made a chꝛistian man.

The paraphrase vpon the epistle of the Apostle saint Paule to the Colossians, by Des. Erasmus of Roterdame.

The fyrst Chapter.

The texte. Paule an Apostle of Iesu Christ, by the wpll of God and bꝛother Timotheus. To al
saintes, whiche are at Colossa and bꝛethꝛen, that beloue in Christ.



Paule an Ambassadour of Iesus Christ,
and that not by any mans ordinaunce, but by the
wpll of God the father, and Timothe, whom for
perfitte consent in pꝛeachyng the gospel I counte
as my bꝛother, to the dwellers at Colossa, whiche
haue both a confidence in Iesus Christ, and also
accoꝛdyng to his doctrine liue a holy life, nowe
thꝛough like kynde of pꝛofession becomen our
dearely beloued bꝛethꝛen.

The texte. Grace be vnto you and peace from God our father and the lorde Iesu Christ.

Grace and peace be there among you from God our father, that as ye
are freely reconciled vnto him, ye may likewise euen as bꝛethꝛen that
haue one comen father, one towarde an other of you alwaye noꝛthe mu-
tual vnitie and concoꝛde.

The texte. We geue thanks to God the father of our lorde Iesus Christ alwayes for you in
our pꝛaiers. For we haue heard of your fayth in Christ Iesu, and of the loue whiche ye
beare to all saintes, for the hopes sake whiche is layd vppon in those for you in heauen, of
whiche hope ye heard before by the true worde of the gospel, whiche is come vnto you:
euen as it is fruiteful (and groweth) as it is also among you, fro the day in the whiche
ye heard of it, and had experience in the grace of God thꝛough the trueti, as ye lerned
of Epaphꝛa our deare felowe seruaunt, whiche is for you a faythful minister of Christ,
whiche also declared vnto vs your loue whiche ye haue in the spꝛite.

And albeit it hath not yet hitherto been my chaunce to see you, yet in
my continual pꝛaiers made to God, and the father of oure Lorde Iesus
Christ both for your sakes I geue him thākes for his benefites bestowed
vpon you, and desyre him also dayly to encrease the same his giftes, and
also to pꝛeserue them, after y by Epaphꝛa we heard of your fayth, wherby
my trust is, ye shalbe saued, not by helpe of Angels, but thꝛough the free
boūteousnes of our Sauour Annoynted, by whō it hath pleased God the
father to geue vs al goodnes. For him both Annoynted would he haue
to be called, because of him al shuld receiue helth, & Sauour, because no
mā shoulde elswhere looke for saluacion. And by him not onely perceiued
we & vnderstode your cōfidence in him, but also your charitie toynd ther
with, whiche as Christ gaue example, ye beare towarde good people, ear-
nestly mindyng to do for them, not for any hoope of auantage, that ye
thinke to receiue therby, but in hope of the euerlasting life, whiche ye wel
knowe

We haue
heard of your
fayth in Christ
Iesu. &c.

knowe is layde vp in heauen for your godlynes. And suerly ito this trust are ye broughte throughe the preaching of Christes gospel, which ye persuade your selfe to be a doctrin of suche trueth, y' albeit it make great promises, & suche as neuer were heard of befoze this tyme, yet forsomuch as God is the authoꝝ of them, ye thinke that the same cannot be but true. And as the same gospel througheout all the woꝛlde hath been dayly moze and moze enlarged: so is it now come to you, euery day growyng and encreasynge, moze and moze plentifully spꝛeadyng it self abꝛoad, bringyng forth the fruite of good woꝛkes, whiche freely growe out of christian charitie, as it hath done in you, growyng styl from better to better, euen synce that tyme, wherin ye fyrst heard and knewe, that throughe the free goodnes of God all their synnes are forgeuen, whiche beleue the gospel, if to theyꝝ right sayth they adioyne pure & vnfained charitie. For so were ye taught by my dearely beloved fellow in seruite, and messenger of trust Epaphras, who hath among you sincerely done myne office, after suche sorte in Iesus Christes behalfe preaching the gospel, that he hath in all pointes been found without corruption. As I therfoze by him taught you, so by him againe vnderstand I your good wyll againe towards vs, not meanyng suche vsuall good wyll, as that is, when men wishe well to to theyꝝ frendes and acquaintaunce, but a spiritual and heauenly fauor, wherewith we vse to loue all suche, by whom the gloꝛye of the gospel is set forth and stablished, though we with out bodily yꝛen neuer sawe them.

Of whiche hope ye heard befoze by the true woꝛde of the gospel.

Whiche also declared vnto vs your loue which ye haue in the spꝛite.

For this cause we also, euen synce the day we heard of it, haue not ceased to praye for you, and to desyre that ye might be fulfilled with the knowledg of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual vnderstandyng, that ye might walke worthy of the lord, that in al thinges ye may please, beyng fruitful in al good woꝛkes, & encreasynge of y' knowledg of God, strengthed with all might, throughe his glorious power, vnto al pacience and long sufferynge, with ioyfulnes, geuyng thankes vnto the father, which hath made vs meete to be partakers of the inheritaunce of saintes in light. Whiche hath deliuered vs from the power of darkenes, & hath translated vs vnto the kyngdome of his deare sonne. By whō we haue redemption throughe his blood, euen the forgeuenies of synnes, whiche is the image of the inuisible God, fyrst begotten of al creatures, for by him wer all thinges create d, that are in heauen, and that are in yearth, visibill & inuisibill, whether they be maieitie or lordship, either rule or power. All thinges were created by him and for him, and he is befoze all thinges, and by him all thinges haue their beyng.

And for this cause we againe not as one vnwoꝛthy of this your fauor, heartely loue you againe, though I neuer sawe you, by and by euen fro that day wherin we were fyrst certifyed of your sayth and charitie, in my dayly prayers callyng vpon God for you, and with seruent petitions besechyng him, that it may please him in you to make perfite and to bypnyng at full suche giftes, as he hath begunne to geue, that ye bothe may moze throughely knowe his pleasure, beyng taught neither by woꝛldely wisdom, noꝝ yet by any superstitious and vaine perluasion of some men, but by a spiritual wisdom and policie, wherof as ye haue already gotten a good part: so would I wishe, that ye lacked nothyng, that ye may in such godly perfeccion passe ouer your life, that the same be to gods honoꝝ, and in al pointes also please him, lettynge no good thing vndone, for so doyng is the meane to please him.

Ye might be fulfilled with the knowledg.

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For to geue onely a credence to the gospel is but a begynnyng to saluation, but the same is with godly and holye woꝝkes made perfite and full. For sufficeth it to haue learned thꝛough pꝛeachyng of the gospel, that God thꝛough his sonne Iesus Chꝛist is the authoꝝ and woꝝker of saluation, vnlesse by the same knowledge ye growe vꝛpe and bꝛyng fooꝝth the frutes of chꝛistian charitie, continually pꝛofityng from better to better, so surely, constantly, and manfully standyng in them, that neither violence noꝝ stꝛyme of persecucion dꝛiue you out of yꝛ right course, foꝝ whose perfourmaũce surely ye nede great assistance and strength. Of strength of oure owne powers we cannot assure our selues. God it is, whiche must geue it, to the ende that the whole gloꝝy of all suche thinges as are by vs valiantly done, may be geuen againe vnto him, whiche of his goodnes enrycheth vs with great pacience and long sufferyng to endure & abyde foꝝ Chꝛistes gospelles sake all suche troubles, as may in the meane tyme befall vs. In whiche persecucions suffering it is not inough to be strong without all feare, but rather besemeth it vs, euen ioyfully & with a good courage to vndertake & suffer them, geuyng thanks to God the father, who hath vouchsafed to call you to suche honour, that wheras heretofore ye woꝝhipped deuils & idols, ye are now of his goodnes called vnto the felowshippe of the Jewes, whiche by reason that they woꝝhipped the true God were in comparison of you, holy, whiche hath also vouchsafed to call you to the enheritaunce of life euerlastyng, in hope wherof all thinges whiche in this world either feare oꝝ flatter vs, must be despised, both foꝝ that he hath geuen you wanderyng befoꝝe in the deepe doungeon of ignoꝝaunce, the light of the gospel, and foꝝ that also ye whiche heretofore were vnder a vile and flauishe bondage subiecte vnto the tyꝛanny of the deuil pꝛince of darkenes, are deliuered thence and conueighed into the kyngdome of his most deuely beloved sonne, to thentent, that ye beyng ioynded into his body should with him enioy one kyngdome.

Wherin suche as are thꝛal to synne, haue no place, and therfoꝝe hath God by his sonne made vs free, by whō the synnes of our elde life are foꝝgeuē. So that now his are ye becomen, by whose benefite & mercy ye are restozed. Consider now, how good a chaunge ye haue made. Befoꝝe your reconciliacion ye were memꝛes of the deuil, now are ye planted into Chꝛistes body, whose dignitie is so great, that he is the image of God the father, whiche father dwelleth in light, wher vnto no man can come, whiche is suchē as can be seen of no man, though after a certayne soꝝte he be thꝛough the sonne seen, whiche to the father is in all pointes beyꝛe like & equal. For neither is the sonne lesse wyse, noꝝ lesse of might, oꝝ of lesse goodnes than is the father. For of late daies receiued he these perfeccions, but euerlastyngly befoꝝe any thyng was made, was he the image of his euerlastyng father, not made, but boꝝne of him, by whō all thynges are made, and by him, whiche onely hath no begynnyng.

He therfoꝝe of him selfe begotte his sonne, and by his sonne, and with his sonne made and create al that is either in heauen oꝝ yꝛ earth, both that may be seen and not seen, the verye angels selfe not excepted, no not the chiefe of them, whither they be maiesties, loꝝdshippes, rules oꝝ powers.

Whiche hath
with al might
through his
glorious po-
wer, &c.

Whiche hath
made vs free
to be partas
hers of the
enheritaunce
of salutes in
light.

For by him
were all thinges
created.

And albeit these orders and powers farre exceede all other creatures, yett see they passing measure vnder him, to whom ye are ioyned: forasmuche as whatsoeuer is made, must to his maker nedes be inferiour. Now are al thinges not onely made by Christ, but also by him gouerned & preserued, in whiche pointe he is also to his father like & equal. For was the sonne begotten after other creatures, but was befoze al other thinges, by whō al thinges haue they? beyng, and should without him perishe, were they not by him mainteined. Thus see ye the excellencie and pzeeminence of Christ, whiche thing I tel you of, lest any manne of Angels thinke moze, than he should.

And he is the head of the body, euen of the congregacion: he is the beginning and first begotten of the dead, that in all thinges he might haue the pzeeminence. The text.

And lest peradventure his glozious and excellent maiestie so feare you away from him, that to aspyre and come vnto the fauor of God the father ye thinke it necessarie to seeke vpon some other meane, heare againe and learne to knowe, how good he is. Christ is in suche sorte chiefe ruler and Lorde of Angels, as I sayd, that he nethelisse vouchesaueth also to be head of the churche, whom he hath so ioyned vnto him, that it cleaueth & is coupled vnto him, euen as the natural body cleaueth vnto the head. Whatsoeuer therfoze is alreadye done in the heade, the same must to vs be comen.

He first of all other rose againe from death, not to the intent he would be immortall onely him selfe, but to the ende he might enhaunce vs his membes to the felowship of his immortal life. Like what is in the first frutes of grayne offerred, the same is generally in the whole heape. He is in dede pzince and authoz of resurreccion, and so shall we thzough him also rise againe. And as among thynges create he is chiefe, in suche sorte yett, that himselfe was not create and made: so is he in restozing creatures chiefe, so that as we are for our beyng & byzth bounde vnto his goodnes: so should we for our seconde byzthe baptisme to liue euertlastyngly, be muche moze beholdyng vnto him.

He is the beginning and first begotten of the dead, at

For it pleased the father, that in him should all fulnes dwell, and by him to reconcile al thinges vnto him selfe, and to set at peace by him thzough the blood of his crosse both thinges in heauen and thinges in earth. The text.

For so hath it pleased the father, that the sonne should with all fulnes of godly power and goodnes be replentished, which should in him so abide and dwell, that we should nede no where to bozowe any thyng, synce the father neither wyll noz can do any thing but that the sonne can do and will. And syth the fathers pleasure was, that so it should be, it becometh not vs curiously to demaunde and serche why, synce it can not be but best, whatsoeuer his wysedome hath once decreed.

That in him should dwell all fulnes.

This wyse to do (I say) God the father thought beste, bothe for our weale and saluacion, and most for his owne gloz, to reconcile al thinges vnto him, not by the ministerie of Angels, but by his owne sonne, whiche with his blood sheddyng, and tourmentyng vpon the crosse, should abo-

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likethe synne, whiche broke the peace and concoyde betwixte heauenly and yearthly creatures. & set all thinges at peace, bothe heauenly & yearthly, making them in Christ to agre together, and to be at an vnitie one with an other.

The texte. And you whiche were sometyme farre of and enemies, because your myndes were set in euil workes, hath he now yer reconciled in the body of his fleche, through death to make you holy & vnblymeable, & without fault in his owne sight, if ye continue grounded and stablished in the sayth, and be not moued awaye from the hope of the gospel, wherof ye haue heard, how that it is preached among all creatures whiche are vnder heauen, wherof I Paule am made a minister,

Of this numbze so reconciled are ye now becomen, ye, (I saye) whiche in yeres past were in suche sozte straungers to God, that in steede of him ye worshipped images of deuils, not only wilfully dissenting from him, but also vying your selves as his cruel aduersaries, whom he hath yet to him selfe reconciled beyng suche as neither looked for so much at his had, and inuche lesse deserued it, and made of you his enemies, his frendes & sonnes, not by the ministry of Angels, but by the bodily death of his onely begotten sonne, whom for that putpouse his pleasure was, that he shuld take our mortal fleche vpon him.

And because there can be betwixte God and synners no peace, it hath pleased him frely to forgyue al the offences of our former life, to the intent he would in his sight make you holy, vnblymeable, and faultles. Wherof I pray you can say your olde debtes to your charge, if he be once contented. And surely contented wyl he be, if once vpon his fre receiuyng of you vnto the sayth of the gospel, ye continually abide in your profession, & leaning vpon this sure and sounde foundation shewe your selves so stedfast and stable, that neither man nor angel be able to moue you fro Christ, of whome ye must hope to receiue all suche giftes as the gospel promisseth, wher vnto ye gaue credence, whiche hath not onely been preached vnto you, but also to all nacions contained vnder heauen.

Unstedfastnes it is to fal awaye fro that, whiche ye haue once allowed, an impudent and a shameles point to reker and coumpte that thing for vaine, in beliefe wherof al the worlde agreeth, and finally to list from that whole preacher and minister I Paule am, whiche would not leaue and forgoe mine owne countreys law, & chaunge it with the gospel of Christ, were I not fully persuaded, that this geate is heauenly and cometh fro God.

The texte. Now say I in my sufferinges for you, & fulfil that whiche is behynd of the passions of Christ in my fleche, for his bodies sake, which is the cōgregation: wherof I am made a minister, accordyng to the ordinaunce of God, which ordinaunce was giuen me vnto you warde to fulfil the worde of God, & ministerie whiche hath been hid synce & world begunne, and synce the beginnyng of generacions, but now is opened to his saintes, to whome God would make knowne, what the glorious riches of this miserie is among the gentiles, which riches is Christ in you, the hope of glozy, whom we preache, warning all men, and teaching all men in al wysedome, to make all men persite in Christ & celsu, wherin I also labor & stryue, eue as farforth as his strength worketh in me mightely,

Now am I so thoroughly persuaded, y the gospel is a thyng of trueth, that I not onely am so farre from beyng ashamed or repenting my selfe therof, that I wyl also to fully suffice, & coumpte stripes, emprisonment
and

and chaynes, euen matter to reioyse and glozie of, which tormentynges I endure not for any offence of myne, but suffer them for your weale, whom I save, though the Jewes neuer so muche save naye, haue no lesse righte to the benefite of the gospell, than haue the Jewes themselues. And why should I not save, that I for your weale suffer, for whom Christ suffered? Why should the Apostle be lothe to do that, whiche Christ our prince and maister disdayned not to do? Christ suffered for vs not onely in his owne body, but also in maner suffereth in oures, eue as one supplying and fulfilling by his ministers suche thynges as mighte in his afflictions seeme vnperfecte, not that his death of it ielfe is insufficient, but because the afflictions and punishmentes of the head and members, of the prince and ministers, are in maner one. These punishmentes the greater and moze vehement they be, the moze redounde and make they to the fulnes and perfection of your saluacion. And not for your saluacion onely, but for þe weale also of Christes whole body, whiche is the churche, do I the office committed vnto me, for to me is committed the cure and ouer light of the congregacion. For Christe hath set and placed me in his stede, and hath deliuered vnto me the custody of his owne bodye, specially for that porcion, whiche is of the Gentiles to be receyued to the gospell. to the intente I should by my labour supply that, whiche he seemed to lacke, and to publyshe þe, which was so many hundred yeares befoze this tyme hidden from the Gentiles, and to teache, that not only the Jewes, but the Gentiles also haue through fayth an entry into this welthy state of the gospel. This to do was by god long since purposed, but yet was this his purpose hidden vntill this tyme from the worlde, and is nowe through my preaching opened to all suche, as forsakyng theyr former vngrectouse lyfe embrace þe doctrine of Christ, to whome it hath pleased god to declare, howe glozious his ryche is toward vs, when by publyshing this his so long hidden misterie the whole worlde percepueth, howe that free saluacion, whiche men firste thoughte was offerred onely to the Jewes, is nowe comen vnto al nacions, & that the keepyng of Moses lawe is not requyred, but fayth onely, so that men doubt not of the promises made in the gospell. In stede of all suche thynges, wherin the Jewes haue had a foolyshe confidence, Christ onely is for you sufficient. If he be in you, ye haue no cause to be soye of the hope ye stande in, beyng both sure ynough, and also through hym glozious, who of hymselfe wyl vndoubtedly performe, as muche as he hath promised. Hym preache we of, and not Moses nor aungels, aduertisyng & teaching not onely the Jewes, but also all people of the worlde, and in so doong leauyng nothyng vntouched, which appertayneth to the wildome of the gospell. And this do we to the intent all men should vnderstand, that whithes they be circumcised or not circumcised, theyr weale is in nothyng els to be set, but in Christ Iesus. To byng whiche fayth into mennes myndes I in suche sorte labour, that for auauncing therof I thynke it not paynfull to put my selfe in so many ieopardies and perilles, which are in dede moze weightie, than our weakenes is able to abyde & suffer. But strong & mightie is he, by whose ayde and mayntenatynge I do these actes, who also wher nedde requireth, with workyng of myracles by vs, byngeth my preaching in credence.

How soye I
in my suffe-
ringes for you
et.

For his bod-
ies sake
whiche is the
congregacion.

Whome we
preache, where-
byng all men
and teaching
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The. ii. Chapter.

The texte. For I woulde that ye knewe, howe great care that I haue for you and for them that are at Laodicia, and for as many as haue not sene my person in the flesh, that they might be comforted when they are knyt together in loue, and in all riches of full vnderstanding, for to knowe the miserie of God the father, and of Christe, in whome are hidde all the treasures of wysedome and knowledge.



Ad this muche haue I sayde, (ye Colossians) not to booste my self vnto you, but because I couete, & ye should knowe, howe carefull I am, and what teopardies I put my selfe in, not only for suche, as I haue presently taught the gospell vnto, but for them also, whiche by lyghte knowe me not, especially for you and the Laodicians, whom thoughe I neuer sawe with my bodely iyen, yet see I them continuallye with the iyen of my hearte, glad of your encrease & furtheraunce, fearful if I espye your enticenes and godly condicions either to be in teoperdie or to be inconstant & wauer. For is it for my selfe so greatly auaylable, that suche as neuer sawe me, know what labours & paynes I take for them, as it dothe auantage them. For by my penyfenes, by my teopardies, and afflictions are they moze picked furth and enforced to consent and cleaue moze together in godly chacitie. lyke & members of one body knyt and surely mortised, wherby also menne moze clearely perceyue and moze certaynely beleue the bountifull goodnes of god the father toward all mankynde, yea toward al creatures, abundantly flowyng abroad, by openyng nowe throughe Iesus Christe the secreete miserie, which hath hitherto bene hidden, whiche is, that besyde hym onely we should despye no worldly wysdome, be that neuer so great, which the wyle Philosophers promisen, or teachers of Moyses lawe, or anye suche as booste that they by speakyng with aungels are taughte, for as muche as in hym alone are contayned and hidde all the treasures of wysedome and fruytful knowledge. Of this fountayne maye we easly drawe, as muche as is to perfite saluacion requyred.

That they
heres might
be comforted.
et.

The texte. This I saye lesse any man should beguyle you with entising wordes. For thoughe I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirite, toying and beholding your order, and your stedfast fayth in Christe.

These popntes for this ende thought I it good to warne you of, because ye should with all diligence take hede, least any beyng instruct with worldly wysdome agaynst the playnes of Christes gospel, blynde and deceyue you with falle tales, beyng yet suche tales, as haue a colourable apparence of trouth and lykelynes. For so are the wyle men of this world in captiouse and subtle reasons of theyr inuencion wont to entangle simple people, of whiche sorte I know that some there are among you, watching how they maye corrupte your fayth.

For albeit I be absent from you, and see not presently, what is done there, yet am I in mynde among you present, with all my herte reioysing to see the good order and condicion of your lyfe, and therewith the soundnes and strength of the sure confidence, whiche ye haue in Iesus Christe, to whome ye haue once wholly commytted your selues.

Thoughte I
be absent in
the A. Q. c.

As ye haue therefore receyued Christ Iesu the lord, euen so walkepe in hym, so that ye be rote and buylde in hym, and stablished through hym, as ye haue learned; and therein be plentous with geuyng thankes.

The texte;

Nowe remaineth this, that ye vpon this good begynnyng continue and profit moze and moze, and as ye haue once receyued and beleued, that Iesus Christe our lord is all goodnes, the head and wellspring of our felicitie: so let all your lyfe agree and consent with your sayth and profession, prouiding alwayes that as ye are through baptysme grafted into hym: that ye lykwyle abide in hym and gather strength. And as the sure and strong foundation of the doctrine of Christes gospel is once aliedy layed in you: so labour ye to buylde vp ther vpon suche a worke, as is so; suche a foundation mete and conuenient. And take hede, that ye wauer not this waye or that waye, as euery blaste of newe doctrine indueth you, but stāde stedfast and stable in that ye haue once learned, and endeuour not only to stande stedfastly, but also to encrease euery daye from better to better, that your sayth and frutes of godly lyfe beyng daply moze and moze augmented ye maye alwayes haue some newe thing to geue god thankes for, whye ye must in dede thanke for all that is by you well done.

Beware, lest any man sporne you through Philosophy and disceitfull vanitie, after the tradition of men, and after the ordinaunces of the worlde, and not after Christe.

The texte.

Suche as would bring you fro your simplicite, watche busely, watche muste ye on the other syde lykwyle, least beyng as it were enchanted with the royall and glyttering apparences of theyr Philosophy, ye be fro your sound sayth alred and brought to the vayne deuities of men, and so become as it were a spoyle or praye for your aduersaries, as ye shall vndoubtedly be, if ye turne from the truth of the gospel, and be led with the rules of mennes onlye makyng, whiche stande in suche thinges, as maye without carnal eyes be sene, and in the grosse pointes of this world, wher as Christes doctrine is heauenly and spirituall, and teacheth the righte and trewe religion, whiche standeth in myndes, and not in meates and drynkes, no; in bodily apparell, no; in keping of dayes, no; yet in waschyng of handes, whiche thynges to trewe religion make nothing. Suche pointes withdraue vs rather fro Christe, and deuide vs fro the wellspring, from whence it were mete we sought for all grace and goodnes.

And disceitfull
vanitie
after the tradi-
tion of me.
c.

For in hym dwelleth all the fulnes of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in hym: whiche is the head of all rule and power, by whome also ye are circumcised with circumcision whiche is done with our handes, forasmuche as ye haue put of the synfull bodye of the fleshe through the circumcision that is in Christ, in that ye are buried with hym through baptysme in whome ye are also risen agayne through sayth, is wrought by the operation of God, whiche raysed hym from death.

The texte.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

In him dwel
leth all ful-
nes of gods
brad bodie.
et.

For into hym are not some certayne giftes deriued, as oute of the ry-
uet a litle water runneth into the dyche, but in hym resteth and dwelleth
corporeally the hole fulnes of the godhead, so that yf ye haue hym, ye nede
not to seke either for the shadowes of Moyses lawe or the subtile conuey-
aunce of worldly wisdom. The trowth is playnly deliuered vs, as al out-
fences beate recorde, no nede haue we to seke for figures or doubtful prom-
ises. Synce ye are once grafted in Christ, and framed into one bodye
with hym, why shoulde you elswher loke to haue any thyng? For since he
lacketh nothyng, & would haue all his treasure comen to al men, thzough
hym & in hym needes must ye be made complet, whither ye lacke wysdome
or power. For as he is the welspring of wysdome, which can neuer be dry-
ed vp, so is he the heade of all power & rule. For is ther any power, no not
of the hyghest order of Angels (I say,) but that the same to hym boweth
his knees. Jewes paradiecture endeouore to bring you in minde, that it
is a weighty matier, to haue you circuncised, as they be, as though the
state of mannes body and suche externe thinges bzought vs into goddes
fauour. But rather be in this perswaded, that whosoether haue Christ, en-
ioye with hym all the glozte and commendacion of circuncision. And who
so haue not Christ to them is all theyr circuncision vayne and vnpzofit-
table. They haue but the shadow of circuncision, ye therof in your soules
haue the verpe trowth. For sythe the Jewes circuncision meaneth, that
groce and carnall desyers, shoulde be cut out of al theyr soules, which now
loke for nothyng but heauenly thinges, vncircuncised needes must they
be, whiche with couetous myndes styll labour to haue moze, which please
their bealyes, whiche w enuy & malice pyne away, which vayne glouiously
seke for worldly prayse, & despayre of heauenly rewardes. But ye contrarie
are thzough Christ verily circuncised, not with that circuncision, which is
done with mannes handes, but after a spirituall kynde of circuncision.

For haue ye a litle piece onely of the carnall man pared awaye, but from
you is cut the whole bodye despyled with syn, and all corrupted with car-
nal lustes, & that thzough the spirituall circuncision of Christ Iesus. For
as he dying forloke his bodye, that was subiect to death, & rysing agayne
receyued a body, whiche coude not dye: so are ye in baptism thzough the
spirite of god with hym spiritually dead, castyng of all the synnes of your
olde lyfe, and not only deade with hym, but also buried with hym. For whē
synfull desyers are kyled, perfite quyetnes of mynde foloweth. And after
suche forgoynge of your bodyes, which were thzal to sinne (whiche sinne is
the very death of the soule) ye are thzough Christ with hym risen agayne
free from synne, noz for your desertes, but only because ye stedfastly beleue
in god, who by his mightie power restored Christ agayne from death to
lyfe, and that he also in you by his power worketh, that vpon free remission
of all your synnes thzough the death of his sone, ye shoulde hencefurthe
liue with him subiect to no sin, but thzough innocent & vprighte life make
haste forwarde to the life, that shall neuer haue ende. Thākes then shoulde
god the father haue for all suche thinges, whiche he thzough his sone gy-
ueth you. Nothing auantaged it the Jewes, because they were circun-
cised, and vncircuncision to you which are Gentiles, was no hinderaūce.

In whom ye
are also risen
gain through
fayth. et.

But

But to be vncircumcised was therfoze a deadly lacke, because ye wer wholly gyuen to groce and wycked desyres and therby subiecte to death, oꝛ rather because ye were without the grace of god, who is the lyfe of mannes soule, ye were spirituallly deade.

And ye when ye were dead through synne and through the vncircumcision of youre fleshe hath he quickened with hym, and hath forgyuen vs all oure trespasses, and hath put out the hande wytyng, that was agaynst vs, contayned in the lawe wytyen, & that hath he taken oute of the waye and hath fastened it to his crosse and hath spoyled rule and power, and hath made a shewe of them openly, and hath triumphed ouer them in his owne personne.

The text;

This kynde of vncircumcision, I saye, was to both soꝛtes of vs comen, whiche god hath with his holy spirite cutte of and taken away forgyuing vs all oure synnes, and in suche soꝛte soꝛgyuynge them, that we are oute of the teopardie of hauynge the same offences any moze hereafter to be layed vnto oure charge, because we haue aduisedly swoꝛne to be obediēt to Moses lawe, foꝛ byeache wherof oure aduersary the deuyl myght haue an action agaynst vs, as agaynst men bounden by theyꝛ owne hande wytyng. Yea the olde obligacion, by tyght wherof the deuyl sued vs, hath Chyiste rased oute, as one as we pꝛofessed the fayth of his gospell, though whome the offences of our olde lyfe are soꝛgyuen, so that the same are layed to no mannes charge. foꝛ whatsoeuer myght of vs by tyghte of this wytyng be requyred, that same hath Chyiste foꝛ our sakes payed vpon the crosse, where the wytyng was rente, toꝛne, and btterly cancelled. foꝛ haue we nowe any cause to feare the tyzannye of Satan, synce Chyiste hath in the crosse by his death vanquyshed the authour of death, and thereby deliuered vs, triumphantly subduynge all the powers and rules of deuylles, carryng vs into his heauenly kyngdome, as though we had bene a tyeche pryce oꝛ botye. foꝛ then declared he them freely and playnly to be ouercōmen and vnhatnyed, when that in sight bothe of men and aungels, he carryed vs about as it were in a triumphe, shewyng that our enemyes were subdued and put to flyght, not by the ayde of aungels oꝛ men, but by his owne myghty power, what tyme he vpon the crosse hanged by so royall a sygne of victoꝛye, and that in suche a hyghe place, whereas euery manne might see it. Onely take hede to this poynt, that ye nomoze fall into youre olde synnes.

And hath put
it at the hande
wytyng that
was agaynst
vs. &c.

Let no man therfoze trouble youre conscience about meate and drynke oꝛ foꝛ a pice of an holy daye, oꝛ of the newe moone, oꝛ of the sabboth dayes which are shadowes of thynges to come; but the bodye is in Chyiste.

The text.

Feare not, least foꝛ dyspysng the ceremonies of Moses lawe any man condempne you, either foꝛ meate oꝛ drynke, be it cleane oꝛ vncleane, oꝛ foꝛ not puttyng a difference betwixt holpe daye and woꝛkyng daye, oꝛ foꝛ not keepyng holy the feaste of the newe moone, oꝛ foꝛ byeakynge the reste of the sabboth daye. foꝛ these obseruaunces were shadowes long befoꝛe signifieng and rudely purtrahing such thynges, as shoulde afterwarde vnsaynedly be exhibite by Chyiste. wherfoꝛe synce we haue nowe the bodye selfe and since we haue the very trowth selfe openly shewed vnto vs, why shoulde we any longer feare shadowes? whoso cleaueth to Chyiste beyng now in heauen regardeth nothyng els but heauenly thynges, but walketh furth euen the tyght pathwaye to the rewarde of immoꝛtall lyfe,

Which are
shadowes of
thynges to
come &c.

The paraphrase of Erasmus upon the Epistle

The text.

Let no man make you shote at a wrong marke by the humblenes and holynes of Angels in the thynges, whiche he neuer saw, beyng causeles puffed up with his fleshy mynde, and holdeth not the head, whereof all the body by ioyntes and couples receyvethe nourishment, and is knyt together, and encreaseth with the encreasynge, that commeth fro god.

In the thynges, whiche he neuer sawe.

Beware therfoze, lest any man by calling you backe agayn to earthly thynges falsly and sleightly deceyue you of that reward, which ye haue already begon to labour for, in steede of heauenly doctrine, teaching you small matters, and in steede of Chyistes true religion, a superstitious worshyping of Angels, and so auance and exalte hymselfe among the simple people of certayne fayned visions, beyng desyrous of worldly glorye, teaching the people suche thynges as learned by aungels, whiche he hath of his owne head by hymselfe forged and imaged, withoute sure truste in him, in comparison of whom it becometh every chistian to despise all thynges, be they neuer so hygh, in the meane season so trustyng vpon his aungels, that he falleth from Chyiste his heauenly head, of whome dependeth the whole bodye of the churche, whiche is from it with all spirituall gistes deriued into euery member thzough the ioyntes and couplynges nourished and encreased vnto the hyghest perfeccion spiritual, that can be, and vnto suche perfeccion, as becometh god to haue, to whome we are thzough Chyist ioyned and coupled.

The text.

Wherfore if ye be dead with Chyiste from the ordinaunces of the worlde, whye as though ye yet lyued in the worlde, are ye led with tradicions? Touche not, taste not, handle not, whiche all perye through the verye abuse, after the commaundementes and doctrines of men, whiche thynges outwardly haue the similitude of wisdom by superstition and humblenes of mynde, and by hurtyng the bodye, & in that they do the same no worshyp vnto the neede therof.

Touche not, taste not, handle not, whiche all, &c.

If Chyiste be to this visibill and groce worlde dead, and lyue nowe in heauen, and if ye in your kynde of lyfe be lykewyse with hym deade to the vsuages of the worlde, hauyng an eye to nothyng, but to heauenly thynges, wherto maketh it to be subiect to mannes ordinaunces beyng suche, as prescribe no suche thynges, as sauour of Chyiste, but are groce and carnall ordinaunces of y^e worlde, as though ye were not nowe deade to suche thynges, but still lyued worldlye. Whye geue you care to any Jew prescribe byng suche thynges to be obserued accordyng to the carnall meanyng of Moyses lawe? Touche not this carcas, it is not cleane, taste not this meat, it is not cleane, touche not this thing, it is holy, and may lawfully be touched of no secular person. So ready are ye to geue care vnto the tradicions and doctrine of men, whiche labour to byng you in mynde, that in difference of meates, in obseruyng of dayes, and in other Jewyshe rules godly religion standeth, as though it so were, that Chyistes doctrine were not for you sufficient. Meate, drynke, or apparell byng vs not into goddes fauour, but are for bodily nedes vsed, and with long longe abuse weare away, and are not the stedfast perfeccions of soules, which cannot be spent, and yet suche as teache suche doctrine, among fooles and vnlearned pretend a fayned colour of wysdome, and with how muche moze superstition, and faultie humilitie they fyl menes myndes, by so muche moze are they made of.

of. fo; a plaine supersticion is it to make Angels equal with Christ. And a faultie humblenes it is thzough Angels to loke fo; that, whiche shuld of Christ him selfe be asked, o; at y lest wple thzough Christ of the father. Meates, drinckes, with suche other visible thinges are geuen, not to be compelled with hurt of our bodyes to abstaine from them, but to the ende that with them our bodyes may be holpen, & with any kynde of apparel against wynde and wether to be maintained and succoured, & be fed with any kynde of meates, and that in al tymes and places without any difference, whansoever it be, & as muche as fo; the tyme shalbe thought nedeful. Jewes they been whose heartes are not yet circumcised frō the grosse and carnal meanyng of the lawe, whiche put suche differences.

The. iii. Chapter.

If ye be then risen againe with Christ, seke those thinges whiche are aboue, where Christ sitteth on the right hande of God. Set your affeccion on heauenly thinges, and not on yearthly thinges. The text.



Ble and lowe are these thinges, & vnbeseemng the true membzcs of Christ. But if ye to worldly affayres be verely dead, & risen againe with Christ to the desyre of high and euerlastyng treasures and commodities, sette at naught suche vile matters, and seeke fo; heauenly pleasures and thinges aboue, where Christ your head sitteth at the right hand of God his father. fo; mete it is that al the studyes and cares of the membzcs were directed to that place, wheras the head is now p;esent, and where the same shall with the head hereafter reigne fo; euer. fo; there liueth euery man, where he loueth.

fo; ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Whensocuer Christ, (whiche is our life) shal shewe him selfe, then shal ye also appeare with him in glozy. The text.

To this world ye seme dead, as whiche are neither delited with worldly wealth, no; yet regarde suche phātalties, wherewith the worldly people are delited. Wherfoze ye liue not here among men, & yet liue ye with Christ betoze God, though y in the meane season after y iudgement of the world your life be hidden. But whattyme Christ shall come againe, and shewe both his glozy and the glozy of his body to all the worlde, then shall men see you with your head, partakers of glozy.

Mortifie therfore your yearthly membzcs: fornicacion, bucle aues, bunatural lust, euil concupiscence, and couerousnes whiche is worshippng of idols: fo; whiche thinges sake the w;ary of God vseth to come on the children of vnbelief, among whom ye walked somtyme, when ye liued in them. But now put ye also away frō you al such thinges, w;ary, fierenes, maliciousnes, cursed speakyng, falsly communicacion out of your mouth. The text.

In the meane season diligently endeuour, that all the body be like vnto the high and heauenly head, whose membzcs if they here dye not vtterly to carnal desyres, they cannot in heauen liue with Christ. The deuil hath

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

And verou-
nes whiche is
worshipping
of idols.

also his body, whiche I elswhere called the body of synne. His members are fornicacion, whiche I among worldly people is enē praised, vnclennes, vnnatural luste, and suche other desyres moze filthy, than are mete to be named, desyre of hurtful thinges, as of glozpe, honour, and vengeance, especially desyre of money, whrch synne among al other nighest draweth to the most outragious wickednes of all, that is to wete, to the worshipping of idols. To these synnes whosoener be subiecte, cannot be partaker of the glozpe of Christ. So farre are they from beyng the true children of God, whiche are with suche outragious vices corrupted, that for the like, he fiercely raged euen vpon his owne people the Jewes, destroyng and disenherityng them as disobedient children. With suche like horrible vices was your life also once corrupted, what tyme ye were not yet thzough baptisme dead with Christ, but liued as your frowarde desyres led you. Now synce Christ hath in him lesse nothyng that is mortal and yearthly, meete it is, synce thzough him ye are bozne agayne, that ye cast away all the filthynes of your olde and former life. And not onely cast away suche great enozmities, as we now spoke of: but also suche thinges, wherein the comen sozte of mē is wont to beate with them selves, as wꝛath, spertenes, malicioulnes, cursed speakyng, that ye not onely haue your heartes pure from suche desyres, but also your mouth cleane frō al filthy communicacion.

The text,

I ye not oute to an other, sayng that ye haue put of the old man with his woꝛkes, and haue put on the newe man whiche is creued into the knowldege and image of him, that made him, where is neither Gentile nor Jewe, circumcision nor vncircumcision, Sabbarus of Scythian, bonde of free, but Christ is all in all thyng.

And image
of him that
made him.

Christ is truth selfe, it is not mete that ye beyng his members should I ye one to an other of you. And to be bꝛiefe, synce ye haue put on Christ, put of all the old yearthly man, with al his woꝛkes & desyres, and put on a new mā whiche wyl neuer be olde, but by reason that in him the knowldege of God dayly moze and moze encreaseth, flourisheth and buddeth vp into better and greater, after the image of Christ, which beyng a new mā him selfe, builded in vs a new man, extinguishtyng the olde. For as many of vs as are planted into Christes bodye, are so farre gone from that we were, as though we were newe made agayne, in somuche that now no difference is there betwixt Gentile and Jewe, betwixte the circumcised and vncircumcised, betwixte the wylde Scythian, and the Grecian and man of Athens, nor yet betwixt the free and the bonde. Among menne suche differences are passed vpon, but befoze God there is of suche thynges no regarde, but Christ whiche is indifferently comen to all, onely geueth al thinges to al men. Christ is to þ bondman, fredome, to the pooze man ryches, to the wylde and barbarous, ciuilitie, to the vncircumcised, circumcision. And to be bꝛiefe, thzough him among you are all thinges made equal, because none should disdaine other.

The text.

Therfoze as clerke of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercy, kyndnes, humblenes, of minde, mekenes, long sufferyng, forbearyng one an other, and forgeuyng one an other, if any mā haue a quarel against an other, as Christ forgaue you, euen so do ye.

Wherfoze

of S. Paule to the Colossians. cap. iiii. Fol. viii.

Wherfoze in stede of your vile members and vnbeselemyng Chyist, put on other members, contrary to those filthy members, which we befoze reherced, and in stede of them putte on suche as are mete for the, whom God hath chosen out to be holy, and vouchsaued to loue. What members are they, some wyl say, without doubt suche as Chyist him selfe both taught, and put in execution, I say, tender mercy, that ye be in a readynes to help the weakenes of other, kyndnes, because ye should in comen couerlacion of life be tractable, humblenes of mynd, lest ye arrogantly auauce your selfe befoze other, mekenes, lest ye vpon offenders vse crueltie, long sufferyng, lest ye be hasty to reuenge, but beate eche one with other of you, & eche forgeue other, if throught mannes infirmitie any thyng be among you, by reason wherof one might haue a quarel againe an other. It becometh you to forgeue eche others offences, synce Chyist, who offended no man, forgaue vs all our trespasses.

Aboue all these thynges, putte on loue, which is the bonde of persitency. And the peace of God rule in your heartes, to which peace ye are called in our body. The texte.

But aboue all other garmentes especially apparel your selves with chyistian charitie, who is so farre from hurtyng any man, that it laboereth to do euery man good, yea to do good for euil. This is the persite & most sure bonde, wherwith the body of Chyist is ioyned together, and the members abide fast, which would els fal on sonder. With charitie wyl folow peace and concoorde, not the comen peace which men speake of, but suche as is made and mainteined by the mightie power of Chyist, stedfastly. Let her alway in your heartes wyne and haue the vpper hande, let her agaynst malice, pryde, wyath, and contencion, haue the victoery. For God hath called you to concoorde, and hath for that purpose reconciled you all vnto him, and made you as it were, one body, to the entent that ye like members of one body, should among your selves be of one mynde.

And see that ye be thankfull. Let the worde of Chyist dwell in you plenteously with al wysedome. Teache and exhorte your owne selues in psalmes and hymnes, and spiritual songes, syngyng with grace in your heartes to the lord. The texte.

Be not vnthankfull, and forgetfull of Goddes great goodnes toward you. With him should we not now haue been at peace, had he not freely forgeuen vs all our synnes: and doeth one brother forgettyng this, make battel againe his brother for a lytle displeasure. Striue not among your selfe for preeminence in worldly wysedome. Let the worde of Chyist, which teacheth thynges belongyng to persite godlynes, dwell and continue in you plentifullly, that in him ye saue & growe wise, so that not only your selfe knowe, what is to Chyist acceptable, but be also able one to teache an other, if any be out of the way, and to geue an other warnyng, if he in his dutie be slacke, in þe meane season at all tyme merry and ioyful in hope of the blisse to come, geuyng praise to God in psalmes, in hymnes, and in spiritual songes, praysyng God, not with our mouth onely, but also more speacially with our heart. For suche are the songes, with whō God

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

is delited, lest any thinke it a great praise to God, onely with his mouth to make a noyse.

The texte. And whatsoever ye do in worde or dede, do all in the name of the lord Iesu, geuing thanks to God the father by him.

Finally whatsoever ye do either in worde or dede, do it so, that it make to the glozy of our lord Iesus, so that all your life and conuersation sanner, expresse and resemble him. Whyles ye are this wyse doyng, if any thing befall you, whether it be prosperouse or other wyse, be not therewith either proude, or dismayed, but for all geue thanks to God the father through his sonne, by whom he turneth all suche chaunces to oute weale and auantage.

The texte. Ye wyues, submitte your selues to your owne husbandes, as it is comly in the lordc. Ye husbandes, loue your wyues and be not bitter vnto them. Ye children obey your fathers and mothers in all thinges, for that is well pleasynge vnto the lordc.

Ye wyues submitte your selues obediently vnto your husbandes, so belemeth it suche as haue taken vpon them Christes name, for whom it is mete in all goodnes to go beyond other. Ye husbandes againe loue your wyues, whom ye must remembre in suche condicion to be subiecte vnto you, that yet to them ye should not be sharpe and bitter. Ye childre be in all thinges obedient to your fathers and mothers, though they commaunde you painefull busines, so that the same be not vngodly. For it is Christes wyll and pleasure that ye should so do.

The texte. Ye fathers, prouoke not your children (to anger) lest they be of a desperatē mynde. Ye seruauntes be obedient vnto them that see your bodily maisters in all thinges: not with ipe seruice as men pleasers, but in singlenes of heart fearynge God. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartely, as though ye did it to the lordc, and not vnto men: knowynge that of the lordc ye shall receiue the rewarde of inheritaunce: for ye serue the lord Christ,

Againe ye fathers abuse not your authoritie vpon your children, nor prouoke them so with cruelnes, that they dispayze. Ye seruauntes in all pointes obeye your maisters, whom by the lawe of man ye are bounde to serue, not onely because they see, and loke vpon you, and for feare, as the comen sorte of heathen seruauntes are wonte to do, thynkynge that they haue done theyr dueties, if they offende not theyr master beyng but a mā, but also with a simple and an vnfaigned heart doyng your duetie, not onely for feare of man, but also for feare of God, who seeth, with what mynde ye do, whatsoever ye do. For consider in your seruice, what your master beyng but a man deserueth, but what seruice soeuer ye do vnto him, what kynde of one soeuer he be, coumpte it, as done to Christ, and not to men, assurnge your selfe, that of him ye shall receiue the rewarde of heavenly inheritaunce, though your vnkynde master geue you nothyng for your laboꝝ, nor accoumpte you among his children. For whyles ye for Christes sake do seruice to vnnete maisters, ye serue Christ.

The texte. But he that doeth synne, shall receiue for his sinne, Neither is there any respecte of persons with God,

for as the maister ys he against his seruaunt any thing offende, though
he

he among men be not punyshed, he shall not yet befoze god escape punishment: so the seruaunt that well doth his duetie, albeit he haue no rewarde of men, whiche with themselves thynke, that they to they; seruauntes are nothyng bound, when they haue done they; dueties, yet shall they not loole they; rewarde at gods hand, who putteth no differēce betwixte persōs but betwixt myndes, no; cōsidereth a mannes condicion, but how wel he doth,

The: iiii. Chapter.

Maisters do vnto your seruauntes, that whiche is iuste, and equall, knowingng that ye also haue a maister in heauen. The texte.



Sayne ye that are maisters abuse not the authoritie gyuen you by mennes lawes, & not fo; any perfection of nature, to exercise tyranney vpon your seruauntes, but gyue them that is iust and lawfull, departing with them sufficiently, in suche thynges as are fo; naturall vles necessarye, & make not fo; your pleasure to muche of some, intollerablye oppressing other, assuring your selues, that ye are rather with them felowes in seruice, thā maisters, fo; asmuche as ye haue with them one cominen maister in heauen, at whose hāde ye shall lide like fauer, as your selues haue shewed to your seruātes.

Continue in prayer & warche in the same, w thakes giuing, praying also fo; vs, that god maye open vnto vs the dooze of vtter aunce, that we maye speake the misterie of Christ, (wherfoze I am also in these bōdes) that I maye vtter it, as it becommeth me to speke. The texte.

And because I would ye should be moze wo;thie mēb;es of Christes body, continue in prayer, not as dull & heauy people by reason of any surfeiting, but as sober & wakefull, in the same also geuyng god thanks, so y; ye not only desyer of god thinges to saluaciō profitable, but also gyue him thanks fo; his dayly giftes, to the intēt that whē he seeth you both thā;full & inidessull, he maye be towarde you moze beneficiall. In the meane tyme ye shall also desyre god fo; vs, y; it maye please his goodnes in suche sorte to take awaye al impedimentes, that his gospel maye freely be preached, y; he thzough faith openyng mennes heartes the misterie maye enter into al mennes mindes which beyng hitherto hidden, y; father would now haue knowen vnto all, as touchyng Christe, thzough whom without helpe of the law he offereth vnto al people saluacion, fo; preaching wherof I lye in these bondes, so y; nothing lette me among al men to publish & spede a h;ode y; gospel of Christ, which am destroule so to do freely & wout feare, euē as he cōmaūded me.

Walke wysely towarde them, that are without, and lose no oportunitie.

Use your selues soberly & discretly with suche, as are to Christes religio straungers, so that in your maners nothing appeare, y; maye either moue them to persecute you, o; withdraue they; myndes & fauer from the gospel. fo; synce it can not be auoyded, but that ye must nedes with heathēs, be conuersaūt, and with them liue familiarly, let them in you fynde, that thzough your new profession ye are in all poyntes becommē therby better; & moze courtyse, namely yf any suche thing chaūce, wherin wout breache of religio ye maye do them pleasure. Nowe must we specially fo; the present tyme endeuout, that all be allured to the profession of the gospel. The texte.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

The oportunitie wherof must not with ianglpyng and vayne contentions be losse, but be bought rather with all the p̄cious goodes and treasures that we haue. For this gyue ouer your honoure, departe with your moneye, for this awaye with your desyer to reuenge. yf with the losse of suche thinges the gospel be furthered, then thinke as it is in dede that your aduantage is great.

The texte. Let your speache be alwayes well sauoured and poudered with salte, that ye maye knowe, howe ye ought to answer euerie man.

Let not your speache to them be reprochfull and rough. but let it sauoure of courtely and gentlenes, & be poudered with the salte of wysdome, remembryng that gentle speache rather soupleth fierle stomackes, & discretion teacheth, what, to whome, & with what sobernes we ought to answer. We must otherwise vse our selfe towarde princes and gouernours of the worlde, otherwys with meane men, & otherwys with lowe persons, after one sorte with suche as are gentle, & after an other sorte with suche as are furiouse. otherwys with learned, otherwys with vnlearned. After suche sorte muste our language be tempered vnto euery mānes condiction, that it may further & promote the gospel. Some time better is it to gyue place when he whome ye intende to teache, with reprochfull wordes gainsayth your teachyng, or he whome thou speakest vnto, goeth couertly aboute to hurte thy doctrine.

The texte. Of all my busines shall ye be certified by Tychicus, the beloued brother and faithfull minister, and felowe seruaunt in the lord, whom I haue sent vnto you for the same purpose, that he myght knowe what ye doe, and that he might comfort your heartes, w^{ch} one Onesimus a faithfull and beloued brother whiche is one of you. They shall shewe you of all thinges whiche are a doynge h^{ere}.

Of my state I wyte not vnto you, but of thatshal Tychicus, the bearer of these letters, certifie you, thzough one comen profession, my well beloued brother, faithfull minister, & felowe seruaunt in preaching the gospel, whome I for this purpose sente thither, both to the intent that by hym ye shoulde knowe, what is here done among vs, and by hym to be certified, howe ye doe, that your myndes maye thzough his communicacion be refreshed, and myne also by his good repozte made of you. And with Tychicus haue I sent Onesimus, whome I would ye shoulde not esteeme and tudge by his olde kynde of lyfe, synce he is nowe my faythful, and beloued brother, whome for this cause ye oughte to make the moze of, because he is a Gentile as ye be, and of an vncircumcised one, tourned to Chyriste. These two shall to you make faythfull repozte, of suche thinges as are here done among vs, as sette as is expedient for you to knowe.

The texte. Aristarchus my prison felowe saluteth you, and Marcus Barnabas systers sonne: touchyng whom ye receyued commaundementes. Yf he come vnto you, receyue hym: and Tulus, whiche is called Justus, whiche are of the circumcision. These ouely are my workeloues vnto the kyngdome of god, whiche haue bene vnto my consolacion.

Aristarchus saluteth you, and albeit he be a Jew, yet for his like faith, ye shoulde make muche of hym. For hym haue I for Chyristes gospels sake of my enprisonment felow and pertaker. Marcus also, Barnabas systers sonne whom ye wel knowe, saluteth you, whome I at an other tyme commended vnto you, commaunding you than, as we nowe do, that if he come to you, that ye with al gentlenes receyue and enterteyne hym. Tulus also, whose surname is Justus greeteth you. These

of S. Paule to the Colossians. cap. iiii. fol. x

These are in dede, to you of a straunge nacion, I saye of the Jewes, and yet of you woꝛthie to be fauoured, because they in pꝛeachyng the kyngdō of god are my woꝛkefelowes, and were vnto me in the afflictions, whiche I suffer, verp cherefull.

Epaphras the seruaunte of Chyiste, (whiche is one of you) saluteth you, and alwayes laboureth feruently for you in pꝛayers, that ye maye stande perfite and full, in al the wil of god. For I beare hym recoꝛde, that he hath a feruent mynde for you, and them that are of Laodicia, and them that are of Hierapolis. The text.

Epaphras greeteth you, whiche is one of you, not only by the pꝛofession of Chyistes name, but also one of the same countrey, who so hartely fauoreth you, that he moste feruently for you maketh his pꝛayer to god, & ye by his helpe maye stedfastly continew in that ye haue begunne, and not be vnperfite chrystians, but in doing al suche thinges, as god requireth, perfite and full. For in this I beare hym recoꝛde, that he hath a feruent loue towarde you, and not toward you onely, but also towarde all them, that are of Laodicia and Hierapolis, whiche boꝛder nigh vnto you.

Deare Lucas the physicion greeteth you and Demas. Salute the byrthen whiche are of Laodicia, and salute Symphas, and the congregacion, whiche is in his house. The text.

Lucas the physicion, who I singularly loue, greeteth you, & so doth also Demas, whiche as yet is with me. Salute alwell other byrthen, that be at Laodicia, as also especially Sympha, with all the congregacion, that is in his house.

And when the epistle is red of you, make that it be red also in the congregacion of the Laodicians, and that ye lykewys reade the epistle of Laodicia. The text.

Allone as this epistle is rehearsed among you, cause that the same also be read in the congregacion of the Laodicians, and agayne read ye the Epistle, which from Laodicia I wrote to Timothy, that they maye profite moze.

And saye to Archippus: take hede to thy office, that thou haste receyued in the lord, that thou fulfill it. The saluacion by the hand of me Paule, remember my bondes, the grace of our lord Iesu Chyist be with you. Amen. The text.

Saye in my name these woꝛdes to Archippus your ruler: loke about and take hede, what charge thou hast taken in hande. It is no mannes busynes and cure, but gods, which is comitted vnto the. See thou perfourme that thou haste vnder taken, as whiche shalte therof to the lord yelde accounte. But because this Epistle with you shoulde be of moze credite, lo I subscribe gretynges to you all with myne owne hande, with Paules hande (I saye) whom ye wel knowe. Reméber my bondes, whom I beare for your sake, and lyue after suche soꝛte, that I of them be not made ashamed. The grace of Iesus be alwayes with you. Amen. Take hede to thy office.

Finis,